# Being "Good Enough"

Posted on November 9, 2014 by [Gillian](#) Lancaster

For as long as I can remember I have been my own worst critic. Many early efforts at new techniques ended up in the trash because they weren't "good enough", or didn't match the image of the project I had seen or which I had in my head. It got to the point where I opted out of art classes because I didn't think I was "good enough".



Perfectionism is a common problem for creative types – we feel we have to produce high level work right from the first attempt. If we don't succeed then we dismiss our efforts out of hand. The good news is that it truly is OK to be "good enough".

Recently I visited my older daughter in England. For the trip back I had downloaded some Udemy videos by Nicola Blakemore about watercolor painting. Being captive for 8 hours is not my idea of fun, so when dinner was over I opened up my iPad and began to watch the videos. The presenter is also a graphic designer, so I felt safe watching what she did, and liked how she quietly and gently led the viewer through the project.

I was so surprised to find that she started very simply, just playing with water and unmixed colors of paint. Slowly a beautiful patchwork of designs appeared on her page. Where borders and boundaries in the art were a bit blurred, she went in with a pen and neatened them up. Sometimes she chose to add designs with the pen and then paint over them, and other times she added swirls and triangles to the dried paint. With growing excitement I realized that this project was well within my comfort zone.

A day after I got home I dug out my childhood paints and bought a small pad of watercolor paper. I began to wonder if this truly was an art technique I could tackle, but the reassurance of the lessons learned at 35,000 feet stayed with me. I dipped my brush into the water and started to daub it onto the paper…

To my surprise the results were pretty – and I was completely engrossed – racing through the pad of paper to see what else I could create. Inevitably some of the paintings were better than others, but my sense of achievement at producing some designs that were attractive – and recognizable – was huge!

Tentatively I showed them to my daughter, and to cut a long story short, she liked them. I scanned some of the pieces to use to create a desk calendar that I then printed, and emboldened by that success, painted 20 cards for sale at a crafts fair. They sold very well, so can no longer get away with panning my art…

How about you, is there an art or craft technique you've tried and dismissed that you could go back and try again?